

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6138

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SHUM SOPN TS

SUBJECT: GOT ATTACKS LE MONDE ARTICLES ON TUNISIA BUT ALLOWS
THEM TO CIRCULATE

1. STARTING MARCH 17, LE MONDE BEGAN SERIES OF ARTICLES
ON TUNISIA BY DANIEL JUNQUA ENTITLED "TUNISIA: THE SIRENS
OF DEMOCRACY." THE ARTICLES HAVE ADDRESSED RECENT
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARE GENERALLY
BALANCED AND OBJECTIVE. THEY GIVE THE GOT AND PRIME
MINISTER NOUIRA CREDIT FOR SIGNIFICANT GAINS OVER THE
PAST SEVEN YEARS BUT ALSO NOTE AS YET UNRESOLVED ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS, NOTE THE RELATIVE REGIDITY OF THE
POLITICAL SYSTEM, AND PROVIDE A FORUM FOR THE CRITICAL
VIEWS OF LEADING OPPOSITON FIGURES.

2. PSD DAILY L'ACTION EDITORIALIZED ON THE LE MONDE SERIES
MARCH 22 UNDER THE HEADLINE "THE SIRENS' SONG." L'ACTION
GAVE SHORT SHRIFT TO LE MONDE'S POSITIVE REMARKS ABOUT
TUNISIA DNA ATTACKED THE ARTICLES AS MOTIVATED BY BAD
FAITH. L'ACTION SAID LE MONDE HAD TRIED TO PUT TUNISIA
IN A BAD LIGHT AND HAD NOT GIVEN ADEQUATE CREDIT TO THE
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GOVERNMENT'S MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.
IT MARSHALED VARIOUS STATISTICS TO SHOW HOW WELL TUNISIA
HAS DONE. L'ACTION SEEMED MOST OFFENDED, HOWEVER, AT A
LE MONDE STATEMENT THAT PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA'S ECONOMIC
SLOGAN/IDEOLOGY, THE "CONTRACT FOR PROGRESS," HAD BEEN
BORROWED FROM EX-FRENCH PRIEMIER CHABAN-DELMAS. L'ACTION
WONDERED WHY LE MONDE THINKS THAT ONLY THE FRENCH ARE

CAPABLE OF COMING UP WITH ORIGINAL POLITICAL THEORY.

3. THE L'ACTION EDITORIAL WAS TYPICAL OF GOT'S REACTION TO CRITICISM IN FOREIGN PRESS. IT JUST DOES NOT LIKE TO SEE OR HEAR COMMENTARY ON ITS POLICIES THAT PRAISES ITS PERFORMANCE LESS FULSOMELY THAN ITS OWN PROPAGANDA. IT IS SIGNIFICANT, HOWTOTYU THAT GOT HAS ALLOWED LE MONDE ARTICLES TO CIRCULATE FREELY IN TUNIS ALTHOUGH THEY CONTAIN DIRECT QUOTES FROM SUCH NOUIRA ENEMIES AS AHMED MESTIRI, BAHY LADGHAM, AHMED BEN SALAH, AND OMAR S'HABOU.

MULCAHY

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 22-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
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